in the North East region is given in the table below:

(Figures in MMT)

Year	Crude Oil Production
1990-91	5.112
1991-92	5.031
1992-93	5.045
1993-94	5.138
1994-95	5.078
1995-96	5.075
1996-97	4.845

(b) The reasons for shortfall in production are:—

(i) Contraints in operating conditions such as bandhs, barricades, strikes, etc.

(ii) Frequent power shutdown affecting artificial lift operations.

(iii) The main oil field of Lakwa, Geleki, Rudrasagar etc. have already crossed their plateau level of production and entered the natural declining phase.

(iv) Problem in acquisition of land for exploration, drilling and production activities.

(c) Measure taken to arrest the declining trend in production are:—

(1) Implementation of new technologies like drain hole drilling, latest lift systems and stimulation techniques.

(2) Enhancement of water injection capacity for reservoir pressure maintenance.

(3) Repair of producing wells and revival of non-flowing oil wells.

(4) 3-D seismic for better reservoir delineation.

(5) Installation of artificial lift.

(6) Sand control/water shutoff jobs.

(7) EPS and connected pipelines in new fields.

(8) Seeking foreign consultancy for field specific problems.

Allotment of Petrol Pumps to SCs/STs in Punjab

396. SHRI MOHINDAR SINGH KALYAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of petrol pumps advertised for allotment to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the country particularly in the State of Punjab, Statewise;

(b) what are the names of the applicants, district-wise who have been allotted these petrol pumps; and

(c) what are Government's plans for allotment of the petrol pumps to SCs and STs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) 396 retail outlet dealerships including 11 for Punjab have been advertised during the period 1994-95 to 1997-98 (upto 30.9.97) all over the country. Out of the above, LOIs have been issued in 102 and 7 cases all over the country and Punjab respectively.

(c) As per the existing policy, 25% dealerships/distributorships allotted through normal selection procedure are reserved for SC/ST on Industry and Statewise basis.

Opening of pipeline sector to private companies

397. PROF. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to open the pipeline sector to private companies; if so, the guidelines and conditionalities attached to it, alongwith the details thereof;